



September 13, 2007

EMS Providers;

You may be aware that plans are being made across the State should a Pandemic Influenza outbreak occur. The Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Program wants to ensure that your Ambulance Service has information concerning planning, proper precautions, procedures, and personal protective equipment (PPE) to be utilized should a Pandemic Influenza outbreak become reality. A Sample Pre-hospital Pandemic Influenza Guidance document is available on the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services website: <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ems/emsindex.htm>. The Guidance may be used to assist you in developing a Pandemic Influenza Plan specifically for your ambulance service.

The Local Health Departments across the State have appointed an Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC) to assist in developing response plans at the local level for this type of event. If you have not been contacted by the Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC), operating through your Local Health Department, we highly recommend contacting the ERC and becoming involved in the local planning for public health response. A map of the Local Health Departments in Nebraska along with contact names and numbers can be found at: <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/puh/oph/lhd.htm>. In addition, a map of the Medical Response Systems (MRS) in Nebraska can be found on the website with the Sample Pre-Hospital Pandemic Influenza Guidance. The MRS was created to enhance the State of Nebraska's ability to respond to emergent and public health situations that involve large numbers of people and/or disruption of services. Since the Local Health Departments are an integral part of the Medical Response Systems, they will have additional information about those systems.

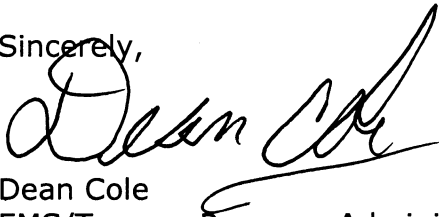
Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Rules and Regulations require each Ambulance Service in Nebraska to have an Infection Control Policy and a Backup Response Plan in place. These policies would be especially important should a Pandemic Influenza outbreak occur. One of the objectives of the Infection Control Policy is to assist in stopping further transmittal of diseases, thus possibly protecting the members of the Ambulance Service and future patients from contracting contagious diseases. During a pandemic outbreak, greater than normal infection control precautions are recommended.

Those additional precautions are included in the attached guidance. For example, the N-95 masks are highly recommended for such an event. A Backup Response Plan is to provide coverage should no one from your Ambulance Service be able to respond to an emergency. Availability of Ambulance Service personnel may become sparse should such an epidemic occur. Therefore, to ensure that your community will have Ambulance Service coverage, it is essential that a Backup Response Plan be in place. You can find a sample Backup Response Plan and a sample Infection Control Policy at: <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ems/policyResources/Model-Policies.htm>.

The documents on the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services website are samples that are being provided for your consideration. The Physician Medical Director for your Ambulance Service needs to be consulted concerning any additions and/or changes to your Ambulance Services policies and procedures. If you have any questions concerning this guidance, please contact Sharon Steele, Western EMS/CISM Specialist at 800-572-7239 or Carol Jorgensen, North Central EMS Specialist at 800-642-4095.

The Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Program appreciates all you do for the citizens across the State of Nebraska and hopes that you find the provided information beneficial in your planning process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dean Cole", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Dean Cole
EMS/Trauma Program Administrator